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ABSTRACT

Using an informal writing style, this journal issue describes the "process approach" to teaching composition in the Beaverton School District (Oregon). The first section contrasts the goal approach, which stresses correct grammar and mastery of specific forms, with the process method, which considers the rhetorical context of conveying a message to an audience. Five writing stages comparable to Aristotelian rhetoric are then described and illustrated. The second section traces the evolution of Beaverton School District's process writing program (particularly the writing across the curriculum component) and explains the district's writing skills assessment program. The program's success can be measured by dramatic improvement in students' test scores from 1985 to 1986 and better student attitudes toward writing. The final section highlights the most useful ideas advanced by three sample elementary, intermediate, and high schools in the Beaverton district. The conclusion underlines the importance of providing well-coordinated inservice support for teachers. Enthusiasm and strong staff commitment are necessary to initiate and maintain process writing programs. The appendices provide the following: (1) the Beaverton writing assessment model, made up of criteria for scoring analytical traits dealing with ideas/content, organization, voice, effective word choice, syntax/sentence structure, and writing conventions; and (2) writing program goals. Included are 12 references, and 13 persons are listed under "Interviews." (MLH)

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# The Writing Program in the Beaverton School District

Thomas Grundy

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October 1986
Vol. 30, No. 2

OSSC BULLETIN

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# Preface

In the last ten years, and in particular since the beginning of the 1980s, writing has become an increasingly important discipline in the educational community, from elementary schools to the university.

This Bulletin begins with a discussion of what has become known as the "process approach" to writing, the approach that has become, over these last ten years, almost universally accepted as the way to teach writing. Next, in briefly outlining the history of Beaverton's writing program, author Thomas Grundy discusses the development and implementation of the writing and the assessment programs. The major section of the Bulletin is in three parts, focusing respectively on an elementary, intermediate, and high school from the Beaverton School District.

We appreciate Mr. Grundy's effective demonstration of the process approach in his own vividly personalized writing style.

Grundy is a graduate teaching fellow pursuing a doctorate in English at the University of Oregon. He has taught writing since 1980, first at California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo and, for the last two years, at the University of Oregon.

Philip K. Piele
*Executive Secretary*

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# Introduction

Hi there audience! This is the OSSC Bulletin on the Beaverton School District's writing program, a program that uses or follows what is called the "process approach" to writing. By way of an introduction to the process approach to teaching composition, I would like to offer a little of my own background as a teacher of writing. How can you refuse?

I began teaching writing at the very end (at least at Cal Poly) of the prescriptive, goal-oriented era of teaching composition and at the beginning (at least at Cal Poly) of the "process approach" era, an era that is steadily gaining momentum and being increasingly regarded as the *way* to teach writing.

I remember quite vividly my first day of orientation to the traditional approach. My fellow fledgling teachers and a few of the seasoned crew sat, pens, like oars, in hand, poised, ready to row and be ruddered into the adventurous waters of teaching composition. They gave us a copy of the required comp text. They gave us a sample syllabus. They conducted a "norming" thirty-minute holistic grading session. They gave us a pat on the back. They said good luck. *And*, they said, two professors would soon set up appointments to formally evaluate our performances. We would have a month or two to get prepared.

Rites of passage are a wonderful thing. So is sulfuric acid. So I, like most of my peers in our efforts not to be too badly burned (and thus permanently scarred) by our first experience with being evaluated as teachers, copied exactly the syllabus and schedule and method given in and described by the sample syllabus. I mean, how could I fail completely when the method that I followed was the method of the previous director of composition?

I did as he had done. I assigned a "description" paper, then a "narration" paper; then, none too recklessly, *I* steered *them* through the narrow passage from "representational" writing and into the more treacherous, less familiar waters of "exposition." I had them write a "comparison-contrast" paper, then a "classification-division" paper, then a "definition" paper, and then, bravely, I encouraged them to sail with me into the misty waters of "causal analysis" and to write the "causal (not casual) analysis" paper.

"Why?" I asked them, and "Why," I asked myself, "wasn't this method working out well?" Why weren't these students turning out great, well-thought-out essays about important issues and ideas. How, indeed, could this student really turn in a paper classifying the different kinds of clothes in her closet and expect me to pass her, and that student classify the kinds of cars he and his friends owned and expect me to pass him? "Why," I softly exclaimed to myself, the little lightbulb beginning to flicker, "something must be wrong."

Well, I passed the evaluations by the professors. And I started to formulate some answers to my questions. After thinking about the problem and reading about some different approaches to composition and talking to others about the "process approach" to writing, I thought that I'd give the process approach a try. And you know what? It worked a lot better than the previous way, that is to say, *it worked*.

Years passed, and summer 1986 came around, and I was offered the opportunity to write this Bulletin on an exemplary writing program in one of Oregon's school districts. Of course, this meant a program that had adopted the process approach to teaching composition. How could I refuse? Not only would it give me a chance to catch up on some reading in modern rhetorical theory, but it would allow me to see how preuniversity students were or could be trained in writing as a process.

After conducting a little research and talking to a few people in the know, the Beaverton School District was decided upon because of its reputation for excellence in the area of writing and because it had implemented writing as a process across all the school levels, from elementary to high school.

What follows, then, is a discussion of writing as a process and how the Beaverton School District has applied the principles of writing as a process in its schools. I hope that, for those unfamiliar with the approach, the Bulletin proves to be both enlightening and motivating, and that, for those familiar with the approach, it reinvigorates them and provides them with at least a few new ideas for their own writing program.

* * *

P.S. As you may have noticed, this Bulletin is being written in a rather informal style. What is emphasized very often in the literature these days about writing is that we are humans writing to other humans and that an attempt to be too "objective" in our prose style is to be stultifying usually, and at least to some degree pretentious. Humans, no matter how much we try to convince ourselves that it is so, are not purely objective creatures. And so, in recognition of that fact, even scientific articles these

days permit the "I" to peep through.

Virtually all the teachers of writing as a process encourage their student writers to take risks, to be creative, to develop an individual voice, for they are individuals talking to other individuals. In an article about teaching writing as a process, could "I" do less?

# The Goal and Process Approaches Compared

What are the problems of using the goal approach to composition? The goal approach, simply put, sets specific writing goals for students. Inevitably this approach *prescribes* particular forms that the students are to master and within which the students are expected to maneuver or operate. In some senses, this emphasis on goals really isn't wrong. Indeed, in the process approach, students must meet certain, specific goals at each grade.

### Writing in a Vacuum

What is different, however, and what seems to make all the difference, is that the stress is on a different part of the writing process. In the goal approach, the stress is on correct grammar and mastery of specific forms. In the process approach, the stress is on content and in making the form fit the meaning and/or function of the prose. One doesn't try to cram one's ideas into a prefabricated box. One builds the box within which one packages one's ideas. Grammar and forms are *means* by which the ideas, the meanings, are conveyed. In the goal approach, the means become the end.

When you have students paint by numbers, what you get is a paint-by-numbers picture. When correct grammar is the major goal of student writing, you get vacuous, but grammatically correct, compositions. When students write in a vacuum, they produce writing that seems like it has been written in a vacuum. Hence, you get student essays about "the three types of clothes in my closet" and "me and my friends got three kinds of cars--big, little and medium." Unfortunately, this is *not* an exaggeration.

Last year, for example, I gave my students what I thought was an "open" assignment, one that would allow for risk-taking and creativity. I had stressed writing as a process, had argued that one should allow the content and audience to suggest the form the essay took and that the form should be a "natural" outgrowth of the content. One of the students, fresh out of a high-school program that used the goal approach, wrote the traditional five part theme: that is, the last sentence of the introduction

contains the thesis statement, which divides the topic into three neat and equal parts, each given its very own paragraph in the body of the paper; then the "essay" is neatly rounded with a concluding paragraph that restates the thesis.

It's nice to be able to write this way. Sometimes it is even appropriate; some subjects or topics or themes do actually naturally divide themselves into three parts. And so it is a useful skill to have. But when the subject only has two parts, attempting to force this structure onto the content, or the content into the prefabricated little box, is disastrous, in this case resulting in a thesis statement with two parts saying the same thing in different words.

The student did not pass the assignment. She argued with me, was angry, indeed righteously indignant that she hadn't passed. She had been taught that way in high school, she said. That was the way her teacher had told her to write an essay (which implies all essays). And she simply could not understand why she didn't pass, indeed why she didn't get an A. After all, she pointed out, she had done rather a masterful job fitting an unwieldy subject into an awkward pattern, a point that I had to concede. But yes, she still had to rewrite the essay.

### Writing in a Context

The case described above is, unfortunately, still not that uncommon, and it illustrates one of the major problems with trying to teach writing in terms of prescribed forms and formulas. The students end up writing for a grade and for a teacher, and therefore they lose, or never gain, the sense of audience.

Over the course of their careers, both as students and professionals, students will have to write in a number of different ways and contexts and for a wide variety of audiences. And no two writing assignments will ever be truly the same. Each writing assignment will require of the author that he or she make decisions at all levels or points of the writing process, and these decisions will have to be based on what is called the rhetorical context. And hence the importance of teaching *writing as a process.*

Writing, as virtually all experts on the subject now agree, is a process. It requires making decisions and solving problems, new problems, ones that arise in the process of writing each different piece. Writing does not take place in a vacuum, but in a *rhetorical context*: that is, a writer is conveying a message to an audience. Wayne C. Booth says that successful or effective writing depends upon maintaining a *rhetorical stance*,

a stance which depends on discovering and maintaining in

> any writing situation a proper balance among the three elements that are at work in any communicative effort: the available arguments about the subject itself, the interests and peculiarities of the audience, and the voice, the implied character of the speaker.

Writing, then, does not take place in some grand isolation. It is done in a rhetorical context. And neither is it simply a matter of pouring contents into the ready-made mold. That is to confuse, again, the means for the end. Writing is a process that takes place over time and in a number of fairly well defined stages. These stages can be defined in a number of ways. In classical, or Aristotelian, terms, rhetoric breaks down into five parts:

Invention (or discovery)
Arrangement (or form)
Design (or style)
Memory
Delivery

Modern rhetorical theorists have redefined the stages: invention becomes prewriting; arrangement and design are grouped under the concerns of writing and rewriting; memory is dropped from the scheme because it is concerned with oration and not writing; and delivery has to do with how we get the material across to the audience, whether by recitation or publication or simply having somebody read our own manuscript. Thus, the process is now put into more distinct stages:

Prewriting, or invention
Writing
Rewriting
Editing (when grammar and mechanics become important)
Delivery

The reason I have stressed context and audience so much is that this is the stage that the "goal" approach so frequently and conspicuously left out, which in turn accounts for so much writing in a vacuum and thus vacuous writing and thus unsuccessful and ineffective writing.

North Clackamas School District, which also uses the process approach to writing, breaks down the process as follows:

1. *Explore* ideas
2. *Plan* what to say and how to say it
3. Make a first *draft*
4. *Revise* and *edit* several times
5. *Share* with the selected audience

An article in the *OSSC Report* (spring 1986) states that teachers

and students in North Clackamas

> are learning that "real" writing occurs when the writer has something to say, and that it becomes meaningful when someone listens and responds.
>
> To make writing "real," students at all levels follow a process that prepares their work for publication [see the list directly above].
>
> Publication is defined as sharing with an audience, such as posting on the bulletin board, sharing with classmates, exchanging with other schools or classes, making booklets, and writing for school newspapers and literary publications or an expanded environment outside the school setting.
>
> The key to success of the writing process is in having an *audience* and *revising* the work many times.

Thank you unknown author and North Clackamas School District.

Since this is a Bulletin about the Beaverton writing program, it is only fitting that we allow them the last word in this section. In their "Final Report of the 1986 District Writing Assessment," they show the writing process as going through the following steps:

Prewriting
Rough draft writing
Revising
Editing
Final draft writing
Proofing
Publishing

What follows in this Bulletin is an attempt to elaborate on how one district has successfully implemented the process approach to writing, and in so doing suggest ways that other districts, perhaps yours, dear defined audience, might implement or improve a process-approach writing program.

# Development of the Beaverton Writing Program

This section focuses first on the history of the Beaverton School District's writing curriculum, explaining how the district arrived at and implemented writing as a process. Next I turn to a brief examination of how the district instituted its program to assess students' writing skills. In the final part of the chapter, I describe the actual structure of the assessment program, that is, how the tests are administered and scored.

## Curriculum

In the early 1980s, the Beaverton School District, focusing its attention on the language arts, became aware that students needed more help with their writing skills. The district, in conjunction with the North Clackamas and Oregon City School Districts, brought Donald Graves and other leaders of the teaching-writing profession to Lewis and Clark College to lead a seminar on teaching writing. To this full-week, summer workshop Beaverton sent one teacher from each elementary and intermediate school and two teachers from each high school. At the intermediate- and high-school levels, the teachers specialized in language arts.

### Training

At the end of the summer, these teachers were to bring back to their schools the knowledge about teaching writing as a process and help train teachers at their respective schools. The district provided teachers with small stipends to help compensate them for the additional time required by such an undertaking.

After completing the summer workshop, the trained teachers began their new task of training the teachers at their schools in writing as a process. For Beaverton's twenty-six elementary schools, five "coordinators" were appointed, four in charge of five schools (including his or her own), the fifth in charge of six schools. In addition to the coordinators, a "facilitator" was appointed for each school. The facilitators met with the coordinators at least once a month for the first year, and the coordi-

nators met with the district coordinators, Thelda Bevens and Elaine Mattson, at least once a month. Thus communication was continually kept up among the schools and between the schools and the district office.

During the first year of formal implementation of the program, writing as a process was stressed; the goal was that every teacher would become aware of writing as a process. The meetings between and among facilitators and coordinators were designed to maximize the amount of information available to all the participants, encouraging them to share with each other what worked and what didn't and helping them to keep alive the excitement of the summer seminar. During the second and third years, the coordinators and facilitators remained in place and the communication network intact. Elaine Mattson, the current elementary curriculum facilitator, stresses the importance of persistence and communication:

> The real key to the program was the communication, keeping it visible for three years. We asked the schools to write a school plan to answer the questions, "What are you going to do to make sure that all your teachers know about writing as a process? How are you going to get all of the teachers to use the writing process in the classroom?" The next year we asked them to review that plan and update it for the next year. And so on.

At the school or building level, it was up to the facilitator and the principal to work out the plans together. During the first two years, the inservice training was conducted at the school level, where the facilitator and the principal, and soon the other trained teachers, educated the teachers in the theory and practice of teaching writing as a process. This past year, Beaverton has instituted inservice at the district level to train new teachers and those few teachers who tried to bury their head in the sand, hoping that writing as a process would simply go away.

Nathaniel Teich, a coordinator for the Oregon Writing Project at the University of Oregon, said that the two major problems with training teachers in the process approach is the lack of follow through by the district and the lack of training in theory. The summer institute and the training provided by those trained in the summer institute gave the teachers a good grounding in the theory, and Beaverton has made sure that there has been, not only sufficient, but thorough follow through. As Marge Smith, elementary curriculum coordinator, said,

> We've tried to build in checks and balances and to make sure that there is the followup to ensure a quality writing program, one that applies the principles of writing as a process.

Now, in the fourth year after implementation, Beaverton has dropped the facilitators and coordinators and is starting the process of "folding" writing into the larger area of language arts. If there are problems with the program, the previous facilitator and the principal are trained to deal with them. If individual teachers have problems, the principal and/or previous facilitator will still be there to help out.

Next year Beaverton will put in place coordinators and facilitators in language arts at the elementary level. As Mattson and Smith explained, a few years ago writing needed special emphasis and the teachers needed special training. It was important to inculcate the idea that writing is a process. Now writing will be reintegrated into the curriculum as it was before, not as a separate study in and of itself.

**Writing Across the Curriculum**

When asked if they thought that reintegration of writing into the language arts curriculum might risk losing the gains that they had made to date, Mattson explained that

> writing as a process wasn't in the textbooks three or four years ago, so we had to draw from the outside and make our own materials. Most of the new textbooks that are being written today are emphasizing writing as a process as their main thrust.

Now that Beaverton's teachers have mastered the art of teaching writing as a process, they can focus more on "writing to learn," or writing across the curriculum.

At the intermediate and high school levels, of course, the language arts curriculum is already and more formally in place and writing is seen more specifically as part of that curriculum. Indeed, the problem often arises that writing is encouraged only in the language arts and is neglected across the rest of the curriculum.

Because the students only have one teacher at the elementary level, there is a much greater focus of energies, and writing naturally blends into the program. At the higher levels, however, fragmentation and "specialization" occur--the students now have a number of teachers, each teaching a different subject (or at the most two). Writing thus gets "naturally" separated out from the other subjects, falling into its "own" area.

As mentioned above, Beaverton sent one language arts teacher from the intermediate schools and two language arts teachers from the high schools to the workshop at Lewis and Clark. These teachers were to inculcate in their fellow language-arts teachers

the principles and virtues of writing as a process. However, the teachers from the other curriculum areas were not brought in on the "process." One can see that certain problems are going to arise when other teachers in other areas, who are "traditionally" trained in writing, give writing assignments to their students. The major problem, in short, is that, at the higher levels, there is not the continuity in teaching writing that there is at the elementary level. This problem can, however, be corrected with time, as all teachers are made aware of writing as a process and encouraged to use these principles when giving writing assignments.

Another danger that should be anticipated at the higher levels is that, because writing is separated from the other subjects, it may tend to be seen by the students as something that is done in a vacuum, or that is done only in terms of English assignments. Hence, writing should be encouraged across the curriculum to stress the content approach to composition, that is, it is not really writing per se that is important, but *what you have to say.*

The Beaverton School District is committed to teaching writing as a process and teaching it that way across the curriculum. Perhaps it is best at this point to allow them to speak for themselves.

> Students should have the opportunity to write frequently in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences. Writing is a skill all students should use in all curriculum areas, not just language arts classes. Writing should be viewed by all teachers as a tool of learning. Students not only learn to write, but also *write to learn.*
>
> Good writing occurs in a climate of trust and acceptance where both personal expression and development of ideas are valued. Students should have ample opportunity to read their writing aloud and to work with their peers in composing and editing. Teachers need to respond to students' writing as readers before correcting as editors. Teachers' support and encouragement will allow the student to take the risks necessary to improve their writing skills. Enthusiastic teachers value writing, serve as models, and value their students as writers.
>
> Beaverton School District is committed to a strong writing program throughout the curriculum. Successful practice and research in writing form the basis for Beaverton's writing program in grades one through twelve. District inservice training will be directed toward increasing teacher knowledge of the writing process and building teacher confidence so they may serve as models for their students and colleagues.

## The Assessment Program

One way to know whether the instructional objectives judged to be of greatest importance are being achieved is to assess student performance. Thus far, the district has conducted two district-wide analytical writing assessments. The purpose of the 1985 and 1986 writing assessments was to gather data for program evaluation and subsequent instructional improvement. The primary question has been, "How well is the instructional program helping to develop students' writing skills?" Carol Meyer, district evaluation specialist, has coordinated development of the Beaverton Analytical Trait Writing Assessment Model, design of the district writing assessment, and utilization of the resulting data.

### Analytical Trait Model

The most recent attempt formally to assess student writing skills started in 1981 when the Language Arts Steering Committee asked the Evaluation Department to conduct an assessment of student writing ability at grades 4, 6, 7, 10, and 12. The first step pursued in the district was to use the holistic approach to writing evaluation. This was only a first step because the holistic approach, aiming as it does at a general impression of competency, does not provide any *specific* information about the particular skills or lack thereof. Hence, in the fall of 1983, Beaverton established the Writing Evaluation Committee to review and evaluate different assessment models in terms of the district's needs. The committee recommended that the district (1) adopt the "analytical assessment" of student writing, and (2) assess both narrative and expository forms of writing. Furthermore, the committee proposed six traits that would be used to evaluate student writing: (a) ideas/content, (b) organization and development, (c) voice/tone/flavor, (d) effective word choice, (e) syntax/sentence structure, and (f) writing conventions.

In May 1984, the district "field tested" student writing topics and in August 1984 the Analytical Scoring Team convened to review writing samples resulting from the field-tested topics and refine the traits. (The latest revision of the "Beaverton Analytical Trait Writing Assessment Model" is included in Appendix A.) During the eight-day workshop held that August, the seventeen language arts teachers read hundreds of student papers to evaluate the topics, score papers to develop their skills and test the model, refine the trait descriptions or scoring criteria, write new topics, identify "training" papers for use with raters the following February, and establish guidelines for the February test administration. In December 1984 inservice workshops were held for the writing facilitators and language arts teachers throughout the district.

Based on the merits of the Beaverton Assessment Model, it was chosen by the Oregon Department of Education for the 1985 Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment as well as by other Washington County districts for their writing assessments in 1985 and 1986.

**Structure of Assessment**

Students at grades 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 12 were included in the district writing assessment. In February 1985 a total of 4,763 students were assessed, and in 1986 5,692 students were assessed. Each student paper was read by at least two raters independently, which amounted to a minimum of 9,526 readings in 1985 and 11,384 readings in 1986. Needless to say, this was a time-consuming effort, considering that each essay was scored for *each* of the six traits. For each trait, the scores from the two readings were averaged. Thus, the results yielded specific information for each student for each of the six traits. A student could score relatively high in one trait and relatively low in another.

A third reading was required only if there was a wide spread (two or more points on a five-point scale) between the first two rater's scores. The extensive training and language arts background required of raters accounts for the scoring consistency: fewer than 4 percent of the papers needed to be read a third time.

The district Analytical Trait Writing Assessment will be very similar in 1987. Future annual assessments, however, will utilize sampling to reduce costs and to divert assessment monies to other district instructional priorities.

Elementary and seventh-grade block students receive an abridged or simplified form of the traits so that they know exactly what is expected of them in their writing and in the formal assessment. Consequently, students know exactly how they are being evaluated and can in turn utilize the same traits when they analyze each other's writing during peer editing.

**Testing Process**

The Beaverton School District has matched the testing situation as closely as possible to the way writing is taught in the classroom. Because the instructional program is based upon writing is a process, students are not required to turn out a polished piece of writing in an hour or two. Instead, testing is conducted over four days.

During the first day the topic is introduced to the students. This is done by having the teacher read aloud the assignment while students read their written copy of the assignment. Five minutes are devoted to topic introduction. Beginning this year, students

ideas individually. The papers will then be collected.

The second day is set aside for the students to write their "rough draft" (45 minutes). And the third is for revising and editing (45 minutes). This is to be done individually to eliminate the possibility that some students will get better or worse input or advice from their peers than will other students. The final day is set aside for proofreading and copying, again to be done independently (45 minutes).

The requirement that students work independently during the assessment is a deviation from the instructional model. In their classes, the students are allowed to collaborate, to share their work with other students during the different stages. But the assessment is meant to measure how well the students can operate as independent writers. This is a test of the students' writing ability and not of the writing project itself. However, determining how well the students write does in part determine the success or failure of the program.

The results of the tests have been very promising, as the "Final Report of the 1986 Beaverton District Writing Assessment" notes:

> The improvement in students' average scores from the 1985 assessment was dramatic. At each of the six grades tested, and for each of the six grades scored, scores went up. There is no chance that improvement over 36 different observations could be some statistical anomaly or error in the data. Further, a careful examination of the procedures used for scoring the samples failed to find any factors which might have resulted in the score increase. In short, it is clear that the Beaverton students tested raised their writing assessment scores and, by implication, wrote better samples than in the previous year. Does this mean that they are better writers now than in 1985? One must be careful when generalizing from a specific example (the writing sample) to a general behavior (overall writing ability). There is, however, every reason to believe that the improved writing assessments are indicative of improved writing ability.
>
> . . . .
>
> The consistency of the improvement of scores from 1985 to 1986 is perhaps surprising, but some improvement was hoped for and, to a degree, expected. The district has made writing one of its priorities for instruction and there has been significant effort devoted to "Writing as a Process" and the "Analytical Trait Model." Beaverton staff have provided an educational intervention and the effects of that intervention may well be the cause of the dramatic increase in scores.

District writing assessment results were reviewed and interpreted by three interpretive panels. Each panel (elementary, intermediate, and high school) emerged with a set of recommendations specific to that level. The Analytical Trait Interpretive Panel summaries helped principals, vice principals, language arts department heads, and teachers to interpret their school results. Carol Meyer noted that this was a critical component of the district assessment, because it made the data useful for instructional program improvement.

The success of the program can also be measured in the attitudes of the students themselves, summed up nicely by Elementary Curriculum Facilitator Elaine Mattson:

> We see the results in feedback we get from the intermediate school teachers, who tell us, "The kids come to us loving to write and they are constantly complaining that they are not getting to write enough." That's when we know that something's been happening in the elementary schools. The seventh-grade teachers are seeing the students much freer in writing--now they will write volumes, where it used to be they would not write a half page. That's the feedback we like to hear.

The kids *like* to write! And as most university composition teachers will tell you, getting them to like to write, getting them motivated, is at least half the battle (when it shouldn't really be a battle at all).

What is attempted above in this section is not a detailed history, structure, and analysis of the Beaverton writing program's curriculum and assessment. The Beaverton School District has already put together much formal documentation that describes their program in much greater detail than I attempt here. If you want more information, I would urge you to contact them.

# The Program's Operation in Three Sample Schools

In this chapter I highlight what appear to be the most useful and interesting ideas that three schools have come up with in their application of writing as a process. Like the students themselves, we will begin with the elementary school, move up to the intermediate level, and finish with the high school.

### Errol Hassell Elementary School

When I spoke to Mike Smith, the principal, and Bev Hobson, the staff services mentor, at Errol Hassell Elementary School, they stressed points crucial to the success of the writing program at their school: inservice training, teacher support, and resources.

The school provides inservice programs in all curriculum areas. In writing, inservice activities take the form of seminars where information is shared with everyone on the staff. Teachers who have received special training conduct these inservice workshops, helping other staff members to "buy into" the program. Smith emphasized that inservices led by peers are often more effective than those led by outside experts because inservice leaders who are from the school can provide support and encouragement to teachers as they try new ideas in their classrooms.

> The excitement, commitment, and motivation of the teachers who received special training has carried over to the other staff members. A few teachers may have originally felt intimidated about the writing process itself and not felt comfortable as writers; hence, they may have felt hesitant about teaching it. The enthusiasm and support of the trained teachers has helped those who might have been a little leery of treading unfamiliar waters.
>
> Our goal is not to produce master teachers of writing because at the elementary level we're basically generalists. The strength of the elementary program is its balance, and we work for outstanding programs in all areas of the curriculum. However, the issue was that we needed to extend our teachers' skills in the writing process. Our approach for inservicing teachers was effective

because the enthusiasm for the writing process traveled across the district at lightening speed.

It is important that the student be motivated to write. If the teacher is motivated and enthusiastic and provides the appropriate opportunities, the chances are that much greater that the student will become a successful writer.

From the beginning of establishing writing as a process, all the teachers were involved in inservice so that everyone knew what was happening across the grades. For example, the sixth-grade teachers knew what the first-grade teachers were doing in writing, and so forth. Communication is so important to the success of projects of this kind that it cannot be overemphasized.

As another means of support, teachers at Errol Hassell Elementary School also have a teacher-resource book, which is a collection of useful techniques for setting up and carrying out all the stages of writing as a process. For example, it contains various techniques for setting up peer response groups and editing groups; it contains a variety of prewriting exercises as well as writing ideas. Thus new teachers, teachers who are new to teaching writing as a process, and veteran teachers who simply want to try new ideas have a resource of teacher-tested ideas.

Also, in keeping with an ongoing inservice program, whether it be in writing or any other subject, teachers have the advantage of having experts within the school available to help them. Teachers trained in writing as a process, for example, are always on the premises, so that if someone has a question or a problem, that person doesn't have to wait or to go outside the building for an answer or support. Help is right there, immediately available.

Smith also stresses the importance of having the resources available to make the program work. As I explained in the introduction, writing as a process involves writing *to* an audience. The principal and staff at Errol Hassell Elementary School recognize this often means publishing the students' works. And because they had some money available for the writing program, they could literally turn a good idea into an exciting reality. They established a publishing house, one capable of printing and binding small volumes of student writings. When you have the ability to print material, you can reach a real audience. What better way to give students a strong sense of the rhetorical context than to provide them with a publishing house.

School staff members have come up with other ideas for inculcating that sense of audience: the author's chair (the author reading his or her work to other students in class); response groups for feedback; a school, district, and state writing festival; and putting student books in the library and student essays on bulletin boards in the halls. In the response

groups, students' comments are limited to content (not grammar), and the focus is on what the students liked, what worked, and how other parts might be improved--not on what is wrong, which can intimidate the student writer and kill the enthusiasm that is so carefully nurtured in the students in this program. Once these students are taught to be effective responders, they can be effective "modelers" for the younger and newer students. Teachers also encourage their students to submit their writing to contests and publications that are geared for student writers.

Errol Hassell Elementary School has a very successful writing program. Writing is carried across the curriculum--the students are urged to "write to learn." And indeed, unless you are writing about writing, this only makes sense. So now that the teachers are trained in teaching writing as a process, they are turning their attention more and more to writing in the content areas. For example, the teachers utilize "learning logs" for all subject areas. Hobson explains:

> When introducing a new concept, like photosynthesis, before you begin to even talk about that subject you ask the students to jot down all they know about photosynthesis. Students have a special notebook where they write this all down, and where they continue to write down what they learn about photosynthesis. Then they get together in groups of four or five and share these ideas. This helps the teacher know what the students know and what needs to be taught. It helps students frame a mental set about the subject. The teacher can also have the students write down a summary of what they learned during the science period, and the teacher then reviews the notebook with the student. The learning logs thus become a way for the students and the teacher to communicate.

Writing is thus a medium of communication, reinforcing the sense of audience as well as the clarification of ideas--it is a useful, integral part of the learning process. Writing itself (especially "correct, grammatical" writing) is seen not as an end in itself and not necessarily as an "end" or finished or polished product, but rather as a means to an end, and the student is given a chance to see that writing can be used for a variety of purposes.

Because they have the resources and a well-designed and ongoing inservice program, the teachers and principal at Errol Hassell Elementary School have been able to make their writing program a success.

### Cedar Park Intermediate School

The students who arrive here from Beaverton elementary schools and other schools that use the process approach to writing are

already well prepared for the Cedar Park writing program. Those students not familiar with writing as a process are taken aside and given a brief explanation of what writing as a process is and what the students are expected to do; the teacher then gives them a short (paragraph) writing assignment and takes them through the stages of writing as a process to show them how it works.

As an introductory writing assignment for the whole class, Genevieve Smith, a seventh-grade English and social studies teacher, has the students write about themselves. This begins with brainstorming; she provides an example of her own writing to help them get started. This allows her to assess where they stand both as writers and as individuals.

Smith likes to begin the peer editing with pairs of students working together (rather than group peer editing) until the students get comfortable with each other. After all, this is a new and, to them, an often threatening, environment. When the students know one another better she moves on to group editing.

Social studies/English teachers at the seventh-grade level and English teachers at the eighth- and ninth-grade levels teach a lot of classes and thus have a lot of grading to do. Because they are trained in the analytical trait approach and because in any given paper they will focus usually on only two or three traits at a time, the grading time does not become excessive. Teachers do not have to mark every error. The students, because they too are familiar with the analytical trait approach (they are given a simplified version), benefit greatly from this type of analysis. The students also use the analytical trait approach in their analyses of other students' papers. Hence, by the time the teacher gets the polished copy, a given piece of student writing has already benefitted from the input of editors familiar with the same approach the teacher is using.

I personally think that this assessment process is wonderful. The teacher's analysis of a student's work should not be some mysterious, holy-dreadful thing that appears in the form of great big disturbing red letters on a students work, with the student left to wonder exactly how the teacher arrived at such-and-such a score. Because the students are familiar with the analytical approach, and because they use it themselves when they evaluate the essays of other students, they know exactly what is going on. And because of the emphasis on writing as a process, the essays are not seen as do-or-die, but as *learning*, situations. When writing is taught as a process involving revision, the "finished" product can always be revised. Writing becomes less intimidating, more natural and exciting. Let Pat Jenkins, an eighth- and ninth-grade English teacher, and Genevieve Smith speak for themselves:

*Pat*: You asked about grading. I don't always have my kids turn in a polished product. I'm big on drafts, because I

think that one of the most important things is to get your thoughts down on paper. You can develop those thoughts as a draft knowing that you can polish it later. That also eliminates a lot of my grading time. I'm asking, "Are you saying what you wanted to say? How can you make this clearer?" We're not even worrying about the form--if it's in pen, if it's neat, if it has all the correct grammatical structures, and so on. The drafts can then *be* polished later. But there's no need of *everything* being turned into the teacher in its final form.

*Genevieve*: Peer editing and group editing help that too, because you do a lot of correcting in class where students pick up a lot of errors, so by the time you get the finished product, it's a lot more polished. This takes a lot less time to grade.

*Pat*: Sometimes I'll have them write three compositions and turn in the best. And they've assessed which one they think is the best. And they *know*--they're right on the mark--they know if it's better than the other one.

The kids know the traits and are comfortable with them. Because the same traits are used throughout the Beaverton district, students have used the trait analysis for years by the time they get to intermediate school. They will have used them for that much longer by the time they get to the high school level. Hence, they know exactly what is expected of them. They know what makes a good piece of writing. And they are, for the most part, comfortable with both writing and the writing process.

Goals are not lost or forgotten, either at this level or at the elementary or high school level. The focus on traits, for example, aims at having the students master specific writing skills. And, as you'll note, grammar and mechanics are among the skills covered in the sixth trait. The seventh-grade writing curriculum designed by Genevieve Smith and Paul Monheimer illustrates how goals have been nicely integrated into teaching writing as a process. The program is outlined month by month for the benefit of new teachers who may need the more specific guide of what they are striving toward, what goal they are expected to meet.

Cedar Park Intermediate School also emphasizes the need for the students to develop a sense of audience. Its student literary publication, *The Cedar Chest*, is printed by the Beaverton School District's publishers. Pat Jenkins also stresses the importance of identifying sources outside the school for publishing student material. Sharing her own experiences with publishing material, she helps her students to try to get published and explains to her students that reject letters are OK, that they are something to learn from and should be viewed as a positive experience. But, of course, acceptance letters and successes in contests are what one always aims and hopes for. Of the forty-three students in her

accelerated ninth-grade English classes last year, thirteen had works accepted, and one student won fourth prize in a national contest. Jenkins said that, at first, they had no hope of getting anything published and that she had no way to really know if they would.

> Once they started coming in, I was overwhelmed. And I am convinced that if a teacher takes the time to have their kids submit to publications, there are *some* publications out there that will *take* some of your kids' work. And those kids got such a high; in fact, the last three copies of *Merlyn's Pen* each had something by one of my kids.

She is excited and motivated about her students' writing and her students are motivated as well. In fact, her excitement could hardly but carry over.

> It's like your baby. I was as proud of those kids getting published as if it had been my own work. It's just fabulous, and the kids know that. They know we like to have them write well, and they know that you're excited about them. I think that's what turns them on. They're doing it not only for themselves; they're doing it for you. There's a certain kind of rapport there that you can't teach a teacher; you have to just develop that.

Both Jenkins and Genevieve Smith said that they have high expectations and believe that students will perform up to those expectations, if they are reasonable and are communicated clearly and enthusiastically to the kids.

Both teachers commend the district for providing sustained support for the writing program, including funds to attend writing workshops where, as one teacher put it, one can get "revved up" after one falls into the "seven year doldrums." Beaverton provides teachers with a Professional Enhancement Program, which allows teachers more opportunities to develop and polish skills. It is important, then, that the district support its teachers, both in terms of providing funds for projects within the school and for the teachers themselves--to develop new skills and refine and refresh the ones they have. Direct district support has been instrumental in making the program at Cedar Park a success as well as making the districtwide program a success as well.

Motivation, enthusiasm, communication, sustained support--these are the key components.

### Beaverton High School

Motivation and enthusiasm are also important ingredients to the successful recipe for the writing program at Beaverton High

School, which owes much of its success to the creative energy, care, and persistence of two of its English teachers, Teresa Brandon and Jack Huhtala. They literally wrote the book on the writing program at their school. (It's called "Beaverton High School Writing Program: Theory, Program Design, Curricular Staff Development.") They, too, emphasize the process approach to writing (and, incidentally, to reading as well). Because we have already covered that process in some detail, what may perhaps be most useful is to expound the premise upon which their program is built (or rather, is *being built*) and the means they have chosen to implement the process approach.

As they explain in the introduction to their book,

> This program is based on the belief that education is not acquired knowledge, but the process of continually acquiring knowledge. This recognition implies that any writing program needs to be designed for growth and change. A real curriculum will always change; a paper curriculum is just a snapshot in time. Our program has been designed to plan for such change. We believe that students and teachers are both lifelong learners, and that real education requires an interdependent relationship between teacher and student as both engage in a constant process of inquiry.
>
> Our writing "program" is not, therefore, to be found in its materials alone, as we expect these to continue to change. While our program is based on the concept of teaching writing as a process, its real core is in the following:
>
> 1. The vision of education on which it is based.
> 2. A program design that encourages both consistency of objectives and innovation in strategies.
> 3. The inservice program that introduced teachers to this instructional model.

I would like to focus on the third point, the inservice program.

Recognizing that teachers are often reticent to change from the familiar way of doing things to a new way, Brandon and Huhtala realized that it would take time for the new writing program to work. They therefore instituted a "three stage process over a period of four years: *Stage 1* introduced the basic theory and enough of the program to begin teaching it. *Stage 2* dealt with practical concerns about implementing the program; *Stage 3* began the process of refining instruction." The inservice program focused on the following areas:

1. Building teachers' confidence and their repertoire of strategies.

2. Stressing group planning and revision, group interaction, and self-reflection.
3. Encouraging accurate observation, feedback, and peer interaction about teaching.

The great amount of peer interaction has probably accounted for much of the success of the program. As Brandon and Huhtala explain,

> We have two models of peer collaboration. One, peer observation, provides feedback to the teacher, which can be provided by a peer teacher. The other, team teaching, requires a teacher with some special expertise to demonstrate this method for another teacher. In some situations, these models can be combined.

They identify four specific peer-collaboration activities: videotaping, peer observation, team teaching, and peer coaching.

As you can see, they have developed a fine process of peer reinforcement, which, recognizing the need for and the inevitability of change, encourages growth of and sharing among teachers. An experimental part of the program allows teachers to have time for peer observation. One English teacher at Beaverton High School is freed up for one period per day to observe, model, or take over other's classes and see firsthand how they teach. This direct, "eyes-on" or "hands-on" approach provides not only new ideas for the teacher sitting in, but provides reinforcement and feedback for the teacher being observed. This open sharing also fosters a sense of community--no one teaches in isolation and everyone knows what everyone else is doing. Because the teachers each take on a few extra students in their other classes, peer observation does not cost the district any extra money.

This has been only a brief and incomplete sketch of some of what is going on in the writing program at Beaverton High School. Appendix B lists the goals of the writing program. For more information on this program, contact Beaverton High School and get a copy of Brandon and Huhtala's booklet. It would be well worth your time if you are considering implementing a new program or improving an old one.

# Conclusion

Providing an actual working model of the process approach to writing--one that you could pick up and follow in implementing such a program in your district--is beyond the scope of this Bulletin. What I have sought to do is give the reader some idea of what is meant by the process approach to writing, emphasizing its advantages while doing so. I also hope that the short discussion about the implementation at three schools gives some useful ideas about how the process approach to writing can be applied.

All three schools emphasized the importance of having well-planned out and coordinated inservice programs that provide teachers with both information and support. In all the schools, the importance of writing is stressed, as well as the importance of writing across the curriculum. This is most easily accomplished at the elementary level, where all the teachers are made aware of writing as a process. The inservice support is already available and in place at the schools, and the district provides additional support for new teachers.

The Beaverton program has been successful for a variety of reasons, among which are that its personnel have recognized that they are in process themselves and hence plan for growth and change. They have actively kept up communication among all the individuals involved in the program. They have persisted in their commitment to teaching writing as a process and--maintaining their enthusiasm and motivation--they have continued to support excellence in writing throughout their district.

# BEAVERTON ANALYTICAL TRAIT WRITING ASSESSMENT MODEL

## CRITERIA FOR SCORING ANALYTICAL TRAITS:

- o IDEAS/CONTENT
- o ORGANIZATION
- o VOICE
- o EFFECTIVE WORD CHOICE
- o SYNTAX/SENTENCE STRUCTURE
- o WRITING CONVENTIONS

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3/4/86

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12/12/85

WRITING ASSESSMENT MODEL

ANALYTICAL TRAIT: VOICE

5 PAPER

The writer speaks directly to the individual reader and shows ownership and commitment.

- o The paper is honest. There is a sincere effort to create and communicate, possibly to the point of taking a risk (e.g., different or unexpected approach or revealing of self).
- o The writing is powerful and natural.
- o Tone is appropriate and consistently controlled.
- o Paper is often marked by appealing liveliness, originality, excitement, suspense, or humor.

3 PAPER

Writer makes an honest effort to deal with the topic but without a strong sense of personal commitment or involvement.

- o Writer often seems self-conscious or unwilling to take a risk.
- o Paper may lack authenticity.
- o Awareness of audience is often limited; however, the writer avoids impersonal or "put on" tone.
- o Paper communicates but only in a routine, predictable fashion.

1 PAPER

The writer seems not to have taken the assignment to heart or simply not to have understood or cared. The result is flat, lifeless, or possibly inappropriate. There is little or no evidence of conscious effort to deal seriously or honestly with the topic.

- o There is no identifiable voice behind the words--things seem tossed together haphazardly.
- o There is no sense that writer is writing to be read.
- o Tone, if identifiable, may be inappropriate to topic or audience or both--or else the writing is SO flat, lifeless, devoid of feeling that nothing recognizable as "tone" emerges at all.

# WRITING ASSESSMENT MODEL

## ANALYTICAL TRAIT: EFFECTIVE WORD CHOICE

### 5 PAPER

Writer consistently selects words that convey the intended message accurately, precisely, and interestingly.

- o Word choice is accurate, specific, and suited to the subject.
- o Writer may experiment with uncommon words or use common words in a delightful way.
- o Writer may strive for vivid, colorful language--but it isn't overdone.
- o Expression is generally appealing--may be fresh or original--and fun to read.
- o If figurative language is used, it's effective.
- o General absence of cliches or slang (except as used for effect).

### 3 PAPER

Writer generally selects words that get the meaning across adequately, but the overall result tends more toward the ordinary than the exciting or entertaining.

- o Language is reasonably descriptive, but reader generally has the feeling that there was a better way to say it.
- o Cliches and hackneyed phrases pop up with disappointing frequency; there are few surprises or twists to entice the reader.
- o Writer doesn't strive for the "best" way to say something, but says it pretty much as anyone else probably would.
- o May be some attempts at the unusual or colorful in some papers, but these tend to be overdone, with "big" words or too many descriptive words used to impress, not used because they fit.
- o Figurative language, if attempted, often does not work well.

### 1 PAPER

Writer is using a limited vocabulary or groping for words or phrases to convey a meaning that may never clearly emerge.

- o Language tends to be consistently flat, vague, or trite.
- o Words lack precision, and imagery is very weak.
- o Writing is often characterized by monotonous repetition or overwhelming reliance on trite, tired words and phrases (or slang) with virtually no attempt to try what's new.
- o Word choice seems careless and may often be just plain wrong.
- o In some papers, the word choice may be so far off the mark that the reader simply cannot infer any sensible meaning.

# WRITING ASSESSMENT MODEL

## ANALYTICAL TRAIT: SYNTAX/SENTENCE STRUCTURE

### 5 PAPER

The paper reads easily throughout and flows smoothly from one idea to the next. (Do not consider punctuation errors here; they are covered under "conventions".)

- o Sentence structure is typically correct and fluent; it clearly enhances meaning. Some sentences may be appropriately long or complex enough to allow full development of ideas or descriptions.
- o Writer shows a real sense of control and writing seems to flow in a natural, unself-conscious way.
- o Most papers have varied sentence structure that adds interest and style.
- o Writing is appropriately concise, not wordy.
- o Run-ons or fragments, if present, are effective.

### 3 PAPER

Paper is generally understandable; sentence structure is generally correct but is not characterized by a natural grace. (Do not consider punctuation errors here.)

- o Writer shows control with simple sentence structure and variable control when more complex patterns are attempted.
- o Occasional sentence faults may necessitate slower reading or rereading; however, these flaws are seldom severe enough to actually obscure meaning.
- o Sentences may tend to follow a consistent pattern or may sometimes simply lack energy or effectiveness (e.g., some papers may show a penchant for wordiness or passive structure).
- o Structure may seem halting, self-conscious.
- o Fragments and run-ons, if present, tend to result from oversight rather than efforts at stylistic effectiveness.

### 1 PAPER

Serious or repeated sentence flaws make this paper difficult to read; just getting through it takes real effort and concentration. (Do not consider punctuation errors here.)

- o Short, choppy sentences often abound.
- o Sentences generally lack fluency; they may seem disjointed, awkward, endlessly rambling, or nonsensical.
- o Nondeliberate fragments and run-ons are common. Writer may seem to have little grasp of how words fit together or of where one idea logically stops and the next begins.

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ANALYTICAL TRAIT: WRITING CONVENTIONS

(GRAMMAR, CAPITALIZATION, PUNCTUATION, USAGE, SPELLING, PARAGRAPHING)

5 PAPER

Writer has a good grasp of standard writing conventions. There are no glaring errors. In fact, errors tend to be so minor that reader can easily overlook them unless searching for them specifically.

- o Agreement is correct, i.e., subject-verb agreement and noun-pronoun agreement.
- o Punctuation is smooth and enhances meaning. (Informalities--use of dashes, contractions--are allowed.)
- o Spelling errors are infrequent.
- o Paragraphing tends to be sound.

3 PAPER

Errors in writing conventions are noticeable and begin to impair readability.

- o Reader can follow what's being said overall, but errors in conventions may require the reader to pause or re-read on occasion.
- o Errors may reflect hasty writing or careless attention to detail in editing.
- o Paragraphing, where appropriate, is attempted, but paragraphs may not always begin at the right places.

1 PAPER

There are so many errors in conventions that the reader must work hard just to get through the paper.

- o Student shows very limited understanding of or ability to apply conventions.
- o Basic punctuation tends to be omitted, haphazard, or just plain wrong.
- o Spelling errors tend to be frequent, even on common words.
- o Fragments, run-ons, and awkward constructions abound.
- o Paragraphing is illogical (e.g., one long paragraph used inappropriately or every sentence begins a new paragraph).

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# WRITING ASSESSMENT MODEL

## ANALYTICAL TRAIT: IDEAS/CONTENT

**5 PAPER**

This paper creates a clear impression or sense of purpose and holds the reader's attention throughout. The writer uses quality details, examples, or anecdotes to develop and enrich the central idea or ideas.

- o The writer seems knowledgeable and thoughtful about the subject.
- o The writer shows insight--a good sense of the world, people, situations.
- o The writer has selected supportive and pertinent information that keeps the reader focused on the main idea(s).
- o Ideas (primary and secondary) are developed in proportion to their significance; the writing reflects a sense of balance.
- o The writer is in control of the topic and its development and has effectively narrowed or defined the topic so that it can be dealt with adequately.

**3 PAPER**

The writer's purpose or intent is reasonably clear; however, the overall result is not especially captivating. Support is attempted, but is less than adequate to fully develop the main idea(s).

- o The writer seems to have considered ideas but has not thought things through all the way.
- o Ideas may seem too limited or too broad, or may tend toward the mundane; reader is not sorry to see the paper end.
- o Support tends to be sketchy, predictable, repetitive, vague, and/or not fully relevant.
- o Insight is sufficient to convey basic meaning, but ideas are not striking or thought provoking.
- o Ideas are sometimes developed out of proportion to significance (e.g., too much attention to minor details, insufficient attention to main ideas).
- o Control or focus may be weak or inconsistent.

**1 PAPER**

This paper lacks a clear, central idea or the central idea can be inferred by the reader only because he or she knows the topic (or question asked). The paper tends to be full of cliches, to consist primarily of circular statements, or simply to be unclear altogether.

- o Insight is limited or lacking; there is virtually no sense of purpose.
- o Information is very limited or vague (e.g., heavy reliance on repetition).
- o There is no evidence that the writer has thoughtfully explored or prepared ideas. Writing tends to read like a rote response--merely an effort to get something down on paper.
- o There is little or no sense of proportion or balance. Development of ideas is minimal or lacking.
- o The paper lacks a sense of control. The paper may seem to go off in different directions or may just restate the topic.

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WRITING ASSESSMENT MODEL

ANALYTICAL TRAIT: ORGANIZATION

5 PAPER

The writer organizes material in a way that enhances the reader's understanding of content, purpose or plot, or that leads the reader to some intended conclusion or insight. The order may be conventional or not, but the sequence is effective and moves the reader through the paper.

- o The writer provides a clear sense of beginning and ending with an inviting introduction and a wrap-up or conclusion that works well.
- o Details seem to fit where they're placed, and the reader is not left with the sense that "something is missing."
- o Transitions tie ideas together in a meaningful way; the writing shows unity and cohesion--both as a whole and within paragraphs.
- o Organization flows so smoothly that the reader need not be conscious of it.

3 PAPER

There is an attempt to arrange ideas effectively, but the pattern may be unclear or the arrangement awkward. The reader can generally follow what is being said, yet the organizational structure may seem forced, obvious, incomplete, or ineffective.

- o The writer seems to have some sense of beginning and ending, but the introduction and/or conclusion tend to be less effective than desired.
- o The organization tends to follow conventional patterns in predictable, forced ways that do not fit gracefully with the topic and its development.
- o The writer may miss some opportunities for transitions, requiring the reader to make assumptions or infer what is meant.
- o Placement or relevance of some details may be questionable. Some interruptive information may be present.
- o Portions of the paper may seem unified (e.g., organization within a given paragraph may be satisfactory), but cohesion of the whole tends to be weak.

1 PAPER

Ideas are haphazardly arranged, arguments or main points hard to follow and/or details disjointed and unrelated. The writing shows little or no sense of progression or direction.

- o There is no clear sense of a beginning and ending.
- o Transitions are very weak or nonexistent.
- o Arrangement of details is confusing, illogical, or may have an abundance of interruptive information.
- o There may be noticeable information "gaps" (e.g., the reader is left dangling, or cannot readily see how the writer got from one point to another).
- o The paper lacks unity and solidarity.

## WRITING PROGRAM GOALS

1. The student will derive pleasure from the self-discovery which is achieved in the writing process.
2. The student will gain pleasure from sharing writing with others.
3. The student will write with sincerity and conviction.
4. The student will practice writing as a process encompassing the steps of thinking, writing, revising, and sharing.
5. The student will be able to revise a piece of writing in terms of both rhetoric and mechanics.
6. The student will learn to comment on other's writing and to accept and use comments from others.
7. The student will use a variety of reasoning and organizational strategies (cause and effect, compare/contrast, definition, classification, etc.), and will develop skill in using rhetorical devices (transitions, parallel structure, figurative language, dialogue, quotes, etc.).
8. The student will develop skills in creating tone and diction appropriate for a chosen audience.
9. The student will be able to sequence sentences logically and will be able to select appropriate details in order to achieve a desired effect.
10. The student will be able to write in a variety of situations (impromptu, journal, letter, exam, critical essay, etc.) and modes (exposition, narration, description, argumentation, persuasion).
11. The student will be able to use source materials to to enhance his or her writing.
12. The student will write with imagination and originality and will feel confident in approaching new writing experiences.

Excerpted from Brandon and Huhtala, pp. 11-15.

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Jack Huhtala, Teacher, Beaverton High School, Beaverton School District, Oregon. Interview, September 15, 1985.

Pat Jenkins, Teacher, Cedar Park Intermediate School, Beaverton School District, Oregon. Interview, September 15, 1986.

Elaine Mattson, Elementary Curriculum Facilitator, Administration Center, Beaverton School District, Oregon. Interview, September 15, 1986.

Carol Meyer, Evaluation Specialist, Administration Center, Beaverton School District, Oregon. Interview, September 15, 1986.

Ann Muflur, Vice Principal, Cedar Park Intermediate School, Beaverton School District, Oregon. Interview, September 15, 1986.

Tom Roberts, Principal, Cedar Park Intermediate School, Beaverton School District, Oregon. Interview, September 15, 1986.

Genevieve Smith, Teacher, Cedar Park Intermediate School, Beaverton School District, Oregon. Interview, September 15, 1986.

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